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## **Delaware orders mandatory evacuation, designates shelters ahead of Hurricane Irene**

***Everyone within ¾-miles of a major waterway in Sussex should  
move now to higher ground; Hurricane Irene poses major threat***

**FOR IMMEDIATE  
RELEASE**

**1200 Hours, Friday  
Aug. 26, 2011**

Delaware's governor has issued a mandatory evacuation order for everyone within ¾-miles of major waterways in Sussex County, effective immediately, as Hurricane Irene closes in on the mid-Atlantic region with fierce winds, catastrophic tidal flooding, and torrential rains throughout much of the weekend.

Gov. Jack A. Markell has ordered that everyone be out of the identified evacuation zones by 9 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 27. In Sussex County, the zone includes the communities of Slaughter Beach, Prime Hook, Broadkill Beach, Long Neck and Oak Orchard, as well along the Del. Route 1 corridor, including the areas in and around Lewes Beach, Henlopen Acres, Rehoboth Beach, Dewey Beach, North Bethany, Bethany Beach, South Bethany and Fenwick Island. This applies to areas that historically are flood-prone.

The order also applies to businesses in the evacuation zone. Businesses are ordered to close Saturday into Sunday. Once the storm's fury has passed, provisions will be made to allow vital services, such as grocery stores and gas stations, to reopen to provide food, fuel and other supplies to the public.

Maps of the evacuation zone will be provided on County and State websites, at [www.sussexcountype.gov](http://www.sussexcountype.gov) and [dema.delaware.gov](http://dema.delaware.gov).

"Do not take this lightly. Today is the day to act," Gov. Markell said in his Friday morning news conference.

Meantime, Sussex County and Delaware emergency planners have designated three shelters for those evacuating coastal communities and flood-prone areas in advance of Hurricane Irene. The shelters will open to the public at noon Friday, Aug. 26.

As capacity will be limited, these shelters should be used as a means of last resort. Residents and visitors evacuating from at-risk areas are encouraged to seek refuge with family or friends elsewhere, if possible. The shelters are:

**Beacon Middle School**  
**19482 John J. Williams**  
**Highway**  
**Lewes, DE**

**Indian River H. S.**  
**29772 Armory Road**  
**Dagsboro, DE**  
**(Pets Accepted)**

**Milford High School**  
**1019 N. Walnut St.**  
**Milford, DE**  
**(Pets Accepted)**

Those visiting a shelter should remember to take adequate clothing, medications, sleeping materials, and food for themselves, their families and/or their pets (where accepted). Shelters will be staffed by the American Red Cross of the Delmarva Peninsula ([www.redcrossdelmarva.org](http://www.redcrossdelmarva.org)).

Regardless of whether visiting a shelter or relocating elsewhere, the public is reminded to have supply kits on hand and know the evacuation routes.

Sussex County Council President Michael H. Vincent concurred with Gov. Markell's assessment, and urged the public to heed the warnings.

"This is the most significant threat Sussex County and Delaware has faced in at least a generation, maybe even longer," Mr. Vincent said. "We cannot stress how important it is for people to follow the advice of our emergency planners and use this time now to get out of harm's way."

Emergency responders are using the Delaware Emergency Notification System and going door to door today to urge residents in at-risk areas to leave immediately. A state of emergency remains in effect, and tolls on Del. Route 1 have been waived to keep traffic flowing on the evacuation route.

A hurricane warning is in effect for Sussex County. Forecasters do not expect Sussex County to sustain a direct hit from the eye of the storm, with the center expected to pass just to the east, perhaps by about 40 miles. However, winds of at least 75 mph or more are expected across the county throughout the event, with gusts to 100 mph possible. The storm is expected to be at its peak between midnight Saturday and 9 a.m. Sunday.

Meantime, the storm is forecast to create a surge of 3 to 6 feet of water along the oceanfront, Delaware Bay and Inland Bays, with lesser surge amounts

along Chesapeake Bay tributaries, including the Nanticoke River. The storm is also expected to kick up waves of 12 to 15 feet in the surf zone, and dump as much as 7 to 10 inches of rain.

The Sussex County EOC encourages residents and visitors to continue monitoring the tropics and conditions as they deteriorate. For updates, stay tuned to local media, the Sussex County EOC website at [www.sussexcountyde.gov/services/storm](http://www.sussexcountyde.gov/services/storm), and the County's Twitter feeds at [www.twitter.com/sussex\\_pio](http://www.twitter.com/sussex_pio) and [www.twitter.com/sussexctyde\\_eoc](http://www.twitter.com/sussexctyde_eoc). The public should also monitor the National Weather Service, at [www.nws.noaa.gov/er/phi](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/er/phi), for the latest forecast, and [www.deldot.gov](http://www.deldot.gov) for the latest traffic updates.

For helpful tips on what to do in preparation for a hurricane, including the County evacuation map and other preparedness materials, visit [www.sussexcountyde.gov/services/storm](http://www.sussexcountyde.gov/services/storm).

For more information, members of the public can call the Sussex County EOC's storm line at (302) 856-7366.

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**Media calls should be directed to EOC spokeswoman Debra Jones at (302) 855-7801 or Sussex County Chief of Public Information Chip Guy at (302) 858-0505.**